

REMARKS

Introduction

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-23 would be allowed if rewritten to overcome the Examiner's objections.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-23 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 13, and 26 have been amended and new claim 27 has been added. Claims 24-25, which are directed to a non-elected invention, have been cancelled to expedite prosecution of the present application. Applicant expressly reserves the right to file these cancelled claims in a continuation or a divisional application.

In view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 1-23 and 26-27.

Claims 1-23

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner objected to minor informalities in claims 1-23, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objections. Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 4, and 13 to correct these informalities. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of these claims.

Claims 26-27

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 26 under 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. D296,022 to Restivo in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,235,722 to Harris. Applicant requests reconsideration of this claim for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 26 has been amended to recite "first and second cleaning pads disposed inside said passageway, said first and second cleaning pads having first and second planar cleaning surfaces... such that said first and second planar cleaning surfaces form a planar interface between said first and second cleaning pads, said planar interface extending across at least a central portion of said passageway and defining an area with substantially no gap between said first and second planar cleaning surfaces ..." Restivo and Harris, either alone or in combination with one another fail to teach or suggest this feature.

The Examiner previously relied on Restivo for disclosing "... said first and second cleaning pads arranged with substantially no gap **at right and left ends shown in front view in Fig. 1** between said first and second planar cleaning surfaces." (Examiner's Emphasis). However, even if the pads shown in Restivo do have "substantially no gap" at the right and left ends, Restivo's pads clearly are not arranged "such that said first and second planar cleaning surfaces form a planar interface between said first and second cleaning pads, said planar interface extending across at least a central portion of said passageway and defining an area with substantially no gap between said first and second planar cleaning surfaces..." as presently recited in independent claim 26 of Applicant's invention. Instead, Restivo's ceiling fan blade cleaning device clearly shows a defined gap shaped gradually for specifically accommodating a fan blade. Because Restivo shows a gap located centrally between pads having a shape corresponding to a fan blade, Restivo does not teach or suggest "a planar interface between said first and second planar cleaning pads, said planar interface extending across at least a central portion of said passageway and defining an area with substantially no gap between said first and second planar cleaning surfaces..." as presently recited in independent claim 26 of Applicant's invention. Harris also does not teach or suggest this feature. Therefore, Restivo and Harris, either alone or in combination with one another, fail to teach or suggest each of the features of independent claim 26, as presently recited. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 26 is patentable over the references cited.

New dependent claim 27 has been added to further define features recited in independent claim 26. Specifically, new claim 27 recites "wherein: said first and second cleaning pads are substantially rectangularly shaped, and said interface extends across the entire width of said passageway; and said dust gutter extends downwardly from said at least one opening so that said dust gutter lies below a bottom surface of said housing." Accordingly, new claim 27 is also patentable over the references made of record.

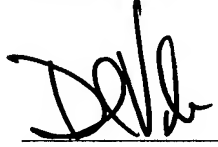
Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, there being no other objections or rejections, this application is in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided below.

It is believed that a \$405 fee for a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) is due with this submission. If any fees are required in connection with the filing of this amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account debit Account 50-0548.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Valencia', is written over a horizontal line.

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